

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

1. (currently amended) A health-care information system comprising:
  - referee hospital information storage means for storing hospital information including diagnostic-care department information, information on doctors, and hospital map information on referee medical institutions as patient referral destinations;
  - examination information acceptance means for accepting patient information from referrer medical institutions as patient referral sources;
  - referee hospital information presentation means for ~~automatically-referring~~ selecting appropriate referee medical institutions from said referee hospital information storage means to ~~said-referrer-medical-institution~~ based on examination information accepted by said examination information acceptance means, and for presenting hospital information on the selected referee medical institution to said referrer medical institutions;
  - referral deciding means for accepting decisions on referee medical institutions ~~from-to~~ said referrer medical institutions; and
  - patient referral information presentation means for creating patient referral information based on patient information accepted by said examination information acceptance means, and for sending said patient referral information to the referee medical institutions decided upon by said referral deciding means, said patient referral information presentation means comprising:
    - reply method selection means for having said referrer medical institutions select a reply method when at said referee medical institutions diagnostic results and diagnostic information including prescriptions is to be sent from said referee medical institutions to said referrer medical institutions; and
  - ~~electronic-patient-chart-preparation means for preparing electronic patient charts based on patient information accepted by said patient information acceptance means;~~
  - wherein ~~said electronic patient charts are also prepared or updated at said referee medical institutions based on said referral information from said referrer medical institutions.~~

2. (previously presented) The health-care information system set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

referral creation means for creating letters of reference based on information input from said patient referral sources; wherein

said patient referral information presentation means transmits to said referee medical institutions patient referral information including said electronic patient charts created by said electronic patient chart creation means attached to letters of reference created by said referral creation means.

3. (currently amended) The health-care information system as set forth in claim 1, ~~said patient referral information presentation means comprising:~~

~~reply method selection means for having said referrer medical institutions select a reply method when at said referee medical institutions diagnostic results and diagnostic information including prescriptions is to be sent from said referee medical institutions to said referrer medical institutions; wherein~~

said patient referral information presentation means sends to said referee medical institutions information on the reply method selected by said reply method selection means, attached to said patient referral information.

4. (original) The health-care information system as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

appointment information presentation means for presenting to said referrer medical institutions scheduling conditions for said referee medical institutions;

appointment acceptance means for having said referrer medical institution decide on dates and times for appointments at said referee medical institution; and

appointment finalization means for finalizing appointments by sending to said referrer medical institutions the appointment dates and times accepted by said appointment acceptance means.

5. (original) The health care information system as set forth in claim 4, wherein said appointment information presentation means comprises appointment information storage means for acquiring and storing appointment conditions for said referee medical institutions.

6. (previously presented) A method of providing health-care information,

comprising:

- storing hospital information on referee medical institutions;
- accepting patient information from a referrer medical institution as a patient referral source;
- automatically referring appropriate referee medical institutions to said referrer medical institution based on said patient information;
- presenting hospital information associated with the referee medical institutions to said referrer medical institution;
- accepting decisions on referee medical institutions from said referrer medical institution;
- creating patient referral information based on said patient information, and
- sending said patient referral information to the referee medical institutions.

7. (previously presented) A method of providing health-care information, comprising:

- accepting patient examination information from a referrer medical institution as a patient referral source; and
- automatically referring appropriate referee medical institutions to said referrer medical institution based on said patient examination information.